

REMARKS

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as anticipated by Stevens (U.S. Patent No. 4,798,586). Applicant respectfully traverses. The cited reference describes a catheter configuration wherein a catheter shaft 10b supports near its distal tip a radiopaque marker 49 sandwiched between the shaft and the distal skirt of the balloon 11. The shaft 10b is not expanded until well proximal of the balloon. Since no reduction in diameter proximal to such expanded section is shown, anticipation is clearly avoided. It is also to be noted that the configuration shown in the cited reference comprises the type of configuration which the present invention improves upon. As is set forth in the specification at page 1, lines 24-27, even a tapering of the distal edge of a balloon skirt (as per FIG 5 of the cited reference) can cause intimal injury. The expansion of the balloon skirt (in order to accommodate the marker) does not address such problem so it is therefore respectfully submitted that an expansion of the catheter rather than a balloon skirt cannot reasonably be considered obvious.

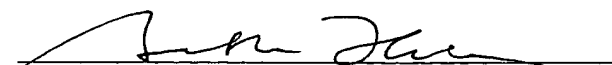
Claims 2-6 were rejected under 35 USC §103 as obvious over Stevens or Dustrude et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,911,752). In light of the non-obviousness of the underlying independent claim as set forth above, it is respectfully submitted that any claim depending therefrom is similarly non-obvious.

In light of the above amendments and remarks, applicant earnestly believes the application to be in condition for allowance and respectfully requests that it be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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